

Senior Series

The Ohio Department of Aging



Senior Series - Ohio State University Extension and Ohio Aging Networks
Working Together to Address Older Adult Issues

Senior Hotline Volume 8, Issue 3 ... a newsletter for older adults or those who care for an older adult

Life Review—What Is Your Story?

It has been said,

**Life can only be understood backwards;
but it must be lived forwards.**

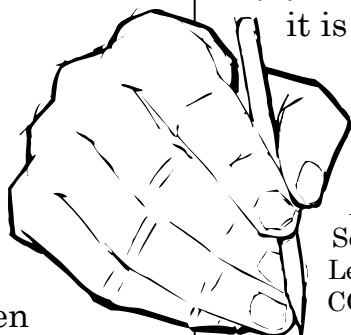
The value of looking backward by writing down your life's story can't be overstated. To have a better understanding of the meaning of our present life, we can explore our past and then write about our life experiences and share them with others.

Writing an autobiography helps us gain perspective into the contradictions and paradoxes of life. It helps shape our sense of personal identity and restores self-sufficiency and confidence. In reviewing the details of our lives, we can see all that we have survived and the many ways we have been

tested by events and by people. This process shouldn't stop with the recalling and writing. We understand our life better if we share it piece by piece with other people.

Why not start to tell yourself and others the story of your life, and "understand it backwards?" It may help to join a local adult education class on autobiographical techniques or check with your local library for resources to help guide you. Bring along a friend to write and share with you to help keep the process moving.

Enjoy the journey. Enjoy your story-- it is a gift to yourself and to others.



Author, Lynn Dobb, Education Manager, Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging
Source: Materials from Preserving Legacies: The Art of Oral History, COAAA workshop (May 2000).

The Secrets of Aging Well

According to the Harvard Study of Adult Development, having a positive aging experience is much more dependent on our attitudes and relationships than on how much money we have or whether our parents lived a long life.

Dr. George Vaillant, author of the book “Aging Well,” shares the results of a study that followed men and women born in 1910, 1920, and 1930 as they grew into adults and experienced aging. This study shows that we **do** have more control over our aging experiences than previously thought.

The following list of factors can contribute to a “successful” aging experience.

How many do you have?

- **Generativity** – caring for and about other people and being willing to give to others as well as receive from others.

The Golden Years



- **Fulfilling Relationships** – working on relationships with others that include gratitude, forgiveness and intimacy.
- **Sense of Humor** – enjoying laughter and play is important no matter your age.
- **Lifelong Learning** – desiring to learn new things and being open to new ideas and perspectives.
- **Accepting Limitations** – accepting the limitations that come with old age but choosing not to dwell on them.

The lesson we can learn from this study is that even though we cannot stop the aging process or even make it easier, if positive, our attitudes towards later life and the types of relationships we have can contribute to a more enjoyable aging experience.

Author: Christine Price, OSU Extension State Gerontology Specialist
Source: Vaillant, G.E. (2002). *Aging Well*. NY: Little, Brown & Company.

**YOU DON'T STOP LAUGHING
BECAUSE YOU GROW OLD,
YOU GROW OLD
BECAUSE YOU STOPPED
LAUGHING.**

~ANONYMOUS



Meet My Senior Friend

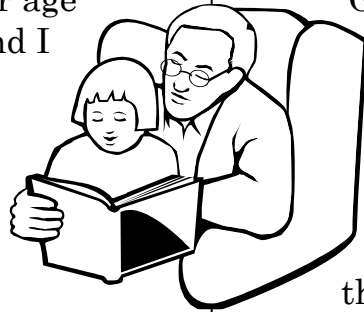
My favorite senior friend is my 96-year old grandfather. Granddaddy (as I have always called him) was born in December of 1905 in New Jersey. He inherited his father's business and became a produce broker in downtown New York City. He shared the partnership of this business with his brother Jimmy and the two worked together for many years.

Despite living far away from each other and having a 63-year age difference, Granddaddy and I speak on the phone regularly. He has been an inspiration to me in a number of ways. First, Granddaddy has always loved learning new things and has been an avid reader all his life. I have no doubt he influenced my own love of reading and learning.

Although he lives at home with the love and support of my step-grandmother, Granddaddy's world is more limited now. Despite these limitations, he continues to stimulate his mind by reading, listening to the radio, watching the news on television and visiting with others on the phone. As he has said in the past, "A mind is a terrible thing to waste!"

Granddaddy has also inspired me to appreciate the small things in life. He gets considerable pleasure from feeling the morning sun on his face and from watching the many types of

birds who come to feed from his birdfeeder. He serves as a reminder to me, as I rush and worry through my day, that what is important is NOT what I cross off my ever-lengthening list, but that I have appreciated the world around me that day. Because of Granddaddy, I take time to enjoy the sunset or to watch a squirrel cautiously munch his snack outside my window.



Granddaddy has also taught me about the importance of relationships and of giving back rather than always receiving. Until he was 94, Granddaddy regularly delivered meals on wheels to those less mobile than him. He and his wife, Betty, were regulars at a neighborhood nursing home and spent many hours brightening the days of others.

Although his aging experience has not been easy--he has survived the death of my grandmother; his children and grand-children live far away; his body is beginning to fail him--these are not the things that he dwells on each day. Instead, he *chooses* to read and enjoy the card he got in the mail. He *chooses* to make friends with the waitress at the restaurant. He *chooses* to be grateful for every sunrise and sunset.

Submitted by: Christine Price, OSU Extension State Gerontology Specialist.

An opportunity to participate in a study about women in retirement!

“Not For Men Only! Exploring How Women Experience Retirement”

Did you know that increasing numbers of women are retiring yet current knowledge on retirement is based only on men’s experiences?

Questions to be answered include:

- Why do women decide to retire?
- What is the transition to retirement like?
- What do women do in retirement?
- What are the challenges facing women in retirement?
- What advice do women have for future female retirees?

Retired women, this is your chance to help document what retirement is like for women!!

If you are:

- A woman
- Retired 7 years or less
- Have worked outside of the home either continuously OR on-and-off for a period of 10 years or more...

You are needed to participate in a study on women’s retirement!

Participation in the study involves:

- Filling out and returning a self-addressed stamped survey questionnaire that will be mailed to you. The survey will ask questions about your retirement experiences and your life in retirement.



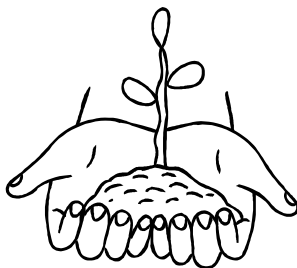
If you choose, you could also participate in:

- An interview in a location of your choice. Professional interviewers, who will first contact participants over the phone, will conduct the interviews.

Call 614-292-4753 or e-mail: Dr. Price at price.121@osu.edu for more details or to volunteer to participate! Your experience can benefit future generations of retiring women!

Dr. Christine Price
151 Campbell Hall, 1787 Neil Ave.
The Ohio State University
Columbus, Ohio 43210

“Extension used to teach us how to grow corn and soybeans, now you have to teach us how to grow older.”



~O.C. Duke on his 97th birthday,
Medina County, Ohio

Warfarin and Vitamin K – Keeping the Balance

Warfarin, also called Coumadin or Sofarin, is among the top 13 drugs prescribed in the US. Vitamin K is plentiful in green, leafy vegetables and in fats and oils.

Warfarin is an anti-clotting and blood-thinning drug. It is used in the treatment of several medical conditions, such as varicose veins, heart disease and stroke. Seniors are among its most frequent consumers.

Vitamin K plays a significant role in helping your blood clot and may play a role in helping prevent osteoporosis.

Warfarin works by decreasing your liver's ability to make vitamin K available to the rest of your body. In turn, your blood's ability to clot is reduced. It is very effective, but a proper dosage level is frequently challenging to establish.

Once an individual's dosage of Warfarin is established, it is important for them to maintain a balance between its anti-clotting and vitamin K's clotting properties. Individuals who take Warfarin are advised to eat foods that provide similar amounts of vitamin K each day.

As a general rule, the “greener” vegetables—brussels sprouts, collards, or spinach—have higher amounts of vitamin K, while “less green” vegetables— asparagus, cabbage, or coleslaw—provide less.

Other sources that provide high amounts of vitamin K—which are frequently hidden in sauces, spreads and dressings—are soybean, canola, cottonseed, and olive oils.



Several factors, such as seasonal availability of foods, returning home after a trip or hospital stay, or the beginning or ending of a weight reducing diet, can all influence the amount of vitamin K individuals consume each day.


While vitamin K food lists and diet guides are increasingly available, it is important for individuals on Warfarin to talk with their doctor about other available resources and current recommendations.

Prepared by Christine L. Kendle, OSU Dietetic Intern, Department of Human Nutrition and Kirk Bloir, OSU Extension Associate, HDFS. Source: Available upon request. Send e-mail to: hdfsext@hec.osu.edu.

Reviewed by Jaime Ackerman, RD, LD, OSU Extension Associate, Human Nutrition.


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OSU Extension State Gerontology Specialist, and
Kirk Blair, OSU Extension Associate,
Human Development & Family Science

Prepared by: *Kirk Blair*

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Keith L. Smith, Associate Vice President for Ag. Adm. and Director,
OSU Extension. TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868

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Sincerely,

Extension Agent,
Family and Consumer Sciences


For more information, contact the OSU Extension office at:



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